



UNITED STATES SENATE
**REPUBLICAN
POLICY COMMITTEE**

Larry E. Craig, Chairman
Jade West, Staff Director

December 4, 2001

We'll Be Home for Christmas . . . If Only in Our Dreams

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

In discussing the schedule for the remainder of this year, Majority Leader Daschle addressed a list of legislation he intends for the Senate to consider before a pre-Christmas adjournment. He stated, "These are must-pass pieces of legislation that have to be done. We can take them in any order" (*Congressional Record*, 11/29/01, S12137).

- Senator Daschle's Wish List:
 - ▶ **Railroad Retirement Bill:** Action on the bill should be completed Wednesday.
 - ▶ **Stimulus Package:** The Senate has already debated this issue for two days. House/Senate negotiations are beginning this week.
 - ▶ **Farm Bill:** A review of past farm bill debates in the Senate suggests that at least a week will be needed to complete this legislation (see next page).
 - ▶ **Election Reform:** Senators Dodd and McConnell do not yet have an agreement on a bill to report to the Senate.
 - ▶ **Bio-Terrorism:** A new bill likely will be introduced by Senators Frist and Kennedy this week. Funding levels remain unresolved.
 - ▶ **Reinsurance Legislation:** So far, a minimum of four competing bills have been introduced in the Senate, with the issue of limiting liability promising a prolonged debate.
 - ▶ **Appropriations Conference Reports:** Only 9 of the 13 annual appropriations bills have been completed.
 - ▶ **Defense Appropriations:** The Committee completes its work on the bill today. The bill's consideration on the Senate Floor may be complicated by a series of budget points of order. Further, as the likely last appropriations conference report to go to

the President, this bill also could face a veto threat if spending has exceeded the agreed upon levels.

The Majority Leader has not fully explained how all of this will be achieved before December 25. Presently, there are only 13 more working days remaining before Christmas Eve, and the legislation on Senator Daschle's list will more than fill the remaining weeks – even if the Congress does not have to deal with a vetoed appropriations bill.

December 2001

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- The Farm Bill alone likely will take at least a week.
 - ▶ In 1985, nearly a month passed between the first day of consideration of the Farm Bill (S. 1714/H.R. 2100) and its final passage.
 - ▶ The fewest number of amendments submitted to a farm bill is 78 (97th Congress, 1st session—S. 884).
 - ▶ In 1996, the last time the Senate passed a farm bill (S. 1541), the bill was first considered on January 31 and was not passed until February 7. Also that year, Senators submitted 339 amendments to the bill.
 - ▶ The shortest amount of time the Senate has taken since 1981 on a farm bill from the first day of consideration until final passage is five days (97th Congress, 1st session — S. 884).

In order for the Senate to adjourn the First session of the 107th Congress before Christmas, Senator Daschle must either pare down his wish list or run rough-shod over the rights of the Minority to debate and amend on the Senate Floor. There are no other alternatives.

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